

Message Text

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16

ACTION EUR-25

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R 020956Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8453

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 6527

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR UR YO

SUBJ: SOVIETS VIEW YUGOSLAV POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS WITH
CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM

REF: BELGRADE 1799

1. SUMMARY. AS TENTH CONGRESS OF YUGOSLAV LEAGUE OF
COMMUNISTS APPROACHES, SOVIETS ARE TAKING CAUTIOUSLY POSITIVE
POSITION ON INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS IN YUGOSLAVIA.
COMMENTARY IN IZVESTIYA APRIL 12 IS ONLY PUBLIC SIGN
SO FAR OF SOVIET VIEWS; IT APPLAUDS EFFORTS TO CONFIRM
LCY'S LEADING ROLE, BUT NOTES CONTINUED ACTIVITY OF
ANTI-SOCIALIST FORCES AND HEDGES ON NEW YUGOSLAV CON-
STITUTION. YUGOSLAV EMBOFF TELLS US THAT EMBASSY'S
SOVIET CONTACTS HAVE REFRAINED FROM EVALUATING YUGOSLAV
AFFAIRS. LCY HAS INVITED CPSU DELEGATION TO CONGRESS
AND THEREARE RUMORS HERE THAT BREZHNEV WILL LEAD IT;
YUGOSLAV EMBOFF DOUBTS THAT, BUT DOES EXPECT POLITBURO-
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LEVEL SOVIET REPRESENTATION. END SUMMARY.

2. WHILE THERE IS OBVIOUS SELF-INTEREST IN YUGOSLAV EFFORTS TO DOWNPLAY IMPROVEMENT OF SOVIET-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS BEFORE AMERICANS, WE ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT, THOUGH SOVIETS SEE THE TREND AS POSITIVE, THEY STILL HAVE SERIOUS MISGIVINGS ABOUT THE YUGOSLAV APPROACH. THEY WILL PROBABLY HAVE READ TITO'S REMARKS IN SARAJEVO (STATE 79007) AS AN IMPLIED THREAT. THE ADVANCES THEY HAVE MADE IN THE ECONOMIC AREA IN ASSOCIATING YUGOSLAVIA MORE CLOSELY WITH THE SOVIET CAMP HAVE NOT BEEN REFLECTED IN THE POLITICAL SPHERE. THEY DO NOT SEEM TO HAVE HAD ANY SUCCESS IN PERSUADING THE LCY TO AGREE TO ATTEND THE ALL-EUROPEAN CP CONFERENCE WHICH THE SOVIETS HOPE WILL TAKE PLACE THIS FALL. MOST IMPORTANT, THE SOVIETS ARE NOT CONVINCED THAT THE YUGOSLAV SELF-MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, DESPITE THE CHANGES BROUGHT BY THE NEW CONSTITUTION, IS ORTHODOX ENOUGH TO POSE NO DANGERS TO SOVIET IDEOLOGY AND TO MOSCOW'S CONTROL OVER ITS ALLIES.

3. THE IZVESTIYA PIECE MIRRORS THESE AMBIGUITIES. IT WAS WRITTEN BY ALEKSANDR BOVIN, A POLITICAL COMMENTATOR WHO HAS BEEN ACCUSED OF REVISIONIST ERRORS IN THE PAST AND IS CURRENTLY REPUTED TO HAVE CLOSE TIES WITH BREZHNEV, AND IS BASED ON A TRIP BOVIN MADE LAST FALL. THE PIECE WAS APPARENTLY HELD UP FOR SEVERAL MONTHS SO AS TO BE A STAGE-SETTER FOR THE LCY CONGRESS IN MAY.

4. BOVIN BEGINS BY QUOTING KIRO GLIGOROV TO EFFECT THAT TENTH CONGRESS MUST CONFIRM LCY'S ROLE AS LEADING IDEOLOGICAL-POLITICAL FORCE. HE THEN SUMMONS BATTERY OF ECONOMIC STATISTICS TO SHOW PROGRESS WHICH YUGOSLAVIA HAS MADE UNDER COMMUNISM BUT (PUTTING THE THOUGHT IN THE MOUTHS OF "YUGOSLAV COMRADES") NOTES THAT THIS IS NOT A SUFFICIENT SIGN OF SOCIALISM. AS PLATFORM FOR TENTH CONGRESS RECOGNIZES, UNDER SELF-MANAGEMENT ROLE OF LCY WAS WEAKENED AND FORCES HOSTILE TO SOCIALISM EMERGED. FOLLOWING 1971 NATIONALITY CRISIS BOVIN CREDITS TITO'S

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DECISIVENESS WITH ARRESTING THIS PROCESS.

5. QUOTING HIS "YUGOSLAV COMRADES" AND TITO, BOVIN SEES BASIC TASK OF TENTH CONGRESS AS PURGING THE LCY OF OPPORTUNISTS, STRENGTHENING PARTY'S ROLE IN SOCIETY, ESTABLISHING PRINCIPLE OF DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM WITHIN PARTY, AND GETTING RID OF IDEA THAT PARTY SHOULD BE A DEBATING CLUB. HE RECORDS THREE LINES OF APPROACH

BEING TAKEN BY YUGOSLAVS: GETTING MORE WORKERS INTO LCY, PERFECTING SELF-MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (WHICH BOVIN CONCEDES IS BASIC TO YUGOSLAV SOCIALISM), AND CHANGING ELECTION SYSTEM. BOVIN DISPLAYS SKEPTICISM ABOUT WORKER-DELEGATE SYSTEM, SAYING ITS PLUSES AND MINUSES NEED TO BE WEIGHED AND WARNING THAT ITS EFFECTIVENESS WILL DEPEND ON ACTIVITY OF LCY AND OTHER SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS.

6. BOVIN IS ALSO CAUTIOUS ABOUT COURSE OF YUGOSLAV ECONOMIC SYSTEM WHERE BASIC PROBLEM, AS HE SEES IT, IS RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PLAN AND MARKET. HE OFFERS THREE PRESCRIPTIONS: FIRST, GET AWAY FROM ILLUSION THAT MARKET BY ITSELF ASSURES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT; SECOND, STRENGTHEN ROLE OF PLANNING; AND THIRD, TREAT PLANNING AS A PERMANENT PROCESS REQUIRING ACTIVITY OF ALL ORGANIZATIONS. CITING DANGER OF SPONTANEOUS FORCES, BOVIN ASSERTS THAT STATE MUST NOT BE SIMPLY A PASSIVE REGISTRAR OF ECONOMIC PROGRAMS BUT MUST BE ACTIVE PARTICIPANT, INTERVENING WHERE NECESSARY. HE NOTES AS "IMPORTANT, POSTIVE STEP" INCREASED ROLE OF PARTY IN ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING.

7. BOVIN CONCLUDES WITH A WARNING THAT "ANTI-SOCIALIST FORCES" STILL OPPOSE STRENGTHENED ROLE OF LCY AND CHARGE THAT IT IS RETURNING TO METHODS OF COMMAND AND SUPPRESSING DEMOCRACY. AS USUAL, BOVIN'S "YUGOSLAV COMRADES" COME TO HIS AID BY ASSERTING THAT SUPPRESSING OPPORTUNISM

AND SUPPRESSING DEMOCRACY ARE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS. BUT IMPRESSION IS LEFT THAT--WHILE SOVIETS FIND MUCH TO APPLAUD IN CURRENT YUGOSLAV COURSE--THEY ARE STILL NOT TOO SURE THAT THINGS WILL TURN OUT AS WELL AS
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